AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [29] with the following replacement paragraph:

[29]   With reference to Fig. 1A, the present invention consists of at least one

user system, for example, an address owner's system 110, a merchant's

system 111, or a shipper's system 112, connected via a network 113, for

example, the Internet, to provide access to an address directory system

114. Each user system may consist of a conventional computer system

comprising, for example, a CPU, an input device, and a memory, and

which optionally may also contain a modem or a display device.

Please replace paragraph [43] with the following replacement paragraph:

[43]   If at step 810, the address directory determines that the address entry is

restricted, the address directory next proceeds to step 812 to verify the

identity of the merchant. This can be done in any number of conventional

ways, including the use of online certificates of authenticity, for example,

those provided by VeriSign or other authentication services. If the answer

at step 813, is no, that is, the merchant's identity is not verified, the

address directory sends a return message (step 814) to the merchant

indicating that the request for access to the address entry cannot be

processed. This prevents the address entry from being accessed by

imposter or otherwise illegitimate entities. If the answer at step 813 is yes,

that is, the merchant's identity is verified, the address directory proceeds

to step 815 and checks to see whether the merchant has previously been

provided a key as a result of having been preselected by the address owner

to receive such a key at the time the address entry was established as

discussed in more detail above with respect to Figs. 3A, 3B, 4A, and 4B.

Please replace paragraph [44] with the following replacement paragraph:

[44]   If the answer at step 815 is no, that is, the merchant does not have an

existing key, the address directory sends a return message (step 816)

providing the access key for use in obtaining the address owner's address.

If the answer at step 815 is yes, that is, the merchant does have an existing

key, the directory then checks at step 817 to see whether the previously

provided key is valid, i.e., has not expired. If the answer at step 817 is no,

the address directory sends a return message (step 818) to the merchant

providing an access key for use in obtaining the address owner's address.

If the answer at step 817 is yes, the address directory sends a return

message to the merchant instructing the merchant to use the merchant's

existing key at step 819. In the present version of the restricted

embodiment of the invention, the key is a coded password 820. To obtain

the address owner's address, the merchant accesses the address directory

at step 821 and executes a query in the address directory, entering the

address owner's customer ID at step 822, the delivery date at step 823, and

the key, i.e., the password, at step 824. The query then returns an answer

and the merchant obtains the address owner's address at step 825.

Please replace paragraph [48] with the following replacement paragraph:

[48] If the answer at step 1012, is yes, i.e. the address owner has chosen to make the address entry anonymous, the address directory then proceeds to steps 1014 and 1015 to verify the identity of the merchant requesting a key to the address entry. If the answer at step 1015 is no, i.e., the merchant's identity is not verified, the address directory sends a return message to the merchant at step 1016 indicating that the request for access to the address entry cannot be processed. If the answer at step 1015 is yes, i.e., the merchant's identity is verified, the address directory next checks at step 1017 to see whether the merchant has an existing key. If the answer at this step 1017 is no, the address directory sends a return message <u>at step 1018</u> to the merchant providing an access key. If the answer at step 1017 is yes, i.e., the merchant already has a key because it was preselected by the address owner at the time the address entry was established, the address directory next checks at step 1019 to see whether the merchant's existing key is valid. If the answer at step 1019 is no, a return message is sent at step 1020 providing the merchant with an access key. If the answer at step 1019 is yes, a return message is sent at step 1021 instructing the merchant to use the existing key. In either case, whether the key is newly provided to the merchant or one that the merchant already possesses, in this version of the anonymous embodiment, the merchant's key is in the form of a first password, as shown at step 1022.